

House dust could make us fat

15th July, 2017



Scientists say house dust could make us fat. They say that people should keep their house clean if they want to avoid putting on weight. The scientists are from Duke University in the USA. They did some research on how

dust affects mice. The researchers collected dust samples from 11 different houses and put them in the cells of mice. Dust from nine of the houses made the mice fatter. The scientists said house dust changed the hormones in the mice that create fat in their body. The scientists said that we breathe in and swallow small amounts of dust. Researcher Dr Heather Stapleton said: "Amounts of dust as low as three micrograms...caused measurable effects."

The dust particles contained chemicals called EDCs. These can change or copy the body's hormones. EDCs are found in sofas and carpets to make them fire resistant. They are also added to some plastics, to make them bend more, and in cosmetics, food packaging, and household cleaning products. The researchers said EDCs are everywhere in most houses. They say the chemicals can affect our health, and that children are at a higher risk. EDCs also cause other health risks including creating learning disabilities in children. Studies have also shown that EDCs can raise the risk of cancer and infertility. The researchers said there was a "critical need" to assess things we make that can make us unhealthy.

Sources:
telegraph.co.uk / genengnews.com / medicalewstoday.com

Writing

We should only use natural things in our products and houses. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

dust / fat / putting on weight / scientists / samples / hormones / breathe / swallow / chemicals / hormones / plastics / cosmetics / packaging / health risks / unhealthy

True / False

- The article says dust helps keep the house clean. T / F
- Researchers did tests on 11 different mice. T / F
- Dust changed hormones in the mice and that made them fatter. T / F
- A researcher said even 3 micrograms of dust called create effects. T / F
- Dust particles contain chemicals called DEC. T / F
- The article says older people are at greater risk from chemicals in dust. T / F
- The chemicals in dust can help with fertility. T / F
- The researchers said there was no need to assess chemicals in dust. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. avoid | a. influences |
| 2. research | b. disorders |
| 3. affects | c. quantities |
| 4. create | d. makeup |
| 5. amounts | e. produce |
| 6. contained | f. keep away from |
| 7. cosmetics | g. evaluate |
| 8. disabilities | h. increase |
| 9. raise | i. tests |
| 10. assess | j. included |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of dust?
- What do you do to get rid of dust in your house?
- What do you think of dust making you fatter?
- Where does dust come from?
- Should we wear a mask in the house?
- Do you worry about dust?
- How can we avoid dust?
- Can we develop dust-free houses?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. people should keep their | a. how dust affects mice |
| 2. avoid putting | b. risk |
| 3. They did some research on | c. samples |
| 4. researchers collected dust | d. chemicals called EDCs |
| 5. we breathe in and swallow | e. packaging |
| 6. The dust particles contained | f. house clean |
| 7. make them fire | g. of cancer |
| 8. food | h. small amounts |
| 9. children are at a higher | i. on weight |
| 10. EDCs can raise the risk | j. resistant |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of doing the dusting
- Are there any good things about dust?
- Should we use sofas that don't create dust?
- Do we need to change the things we use to make things?
- Will you clean your house after reading this article?
- What other things in the house are harmful to us?
- What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

Spelling

- if they want to vaodi putting on weight
- research on how dust etfafsc mice
- researchers collected dust plamses
- dust changed the eshnmoor in the mice
- wsoawll small amounts of dust
- measurable ffseetc
- The dust particles contained aciemlchs called EDCs
- make them fire anttsesri
- household cleaning putcdsor
- creating learning ilssbaietiid in children
- EDCs can rseai the risk of cancer
- a ciltrica need to assess things

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. a	4. e	5. c
6. j	7. d	8. b	9. h	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Dust

You think dust is the unhealthiest thing in a house. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't so bad about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least unhealthy of these (and why): electrical wiring, damp or bacteria.

Role B – Electrical Wiring

You think electrical wiring is the unhealthiest thing in a house. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't so bad about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least unhealthy of these (and why): dust, damp or bacteria.

Role C – Damp

You think damp is the unhealthiest thing in a house. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't so bad about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least unhealthy of these (and why): electrical wiring, dust or bacteria.

Role D – Bacteria

You think bacteria is the unhealthiest thing in a house. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what isn't so bad about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least unhealthy of these (and why): electrical wiring, damp or dust.

Speaking – Unhealthy house

Rank these with your partner. Put the most unhealthy things in the house at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|---------------------|
| • damp | • dust |
| • bacteria | • electrical wiring |
| • bugs | • air conditioning |
| • asbestos | • bathroom cleaners |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.